

S P E E C H

FOR THE

Bill against Occasional Conformity.

Mr. Speaker,

HER Majesty has been pleas'd in all her Speeches to give us so many assurances of supporting the Church of *England* as by Law Established; and also such instances of being punctual to her promise in this particular, that I think she very justly deserves the Title of *Defender of the Faith*. Her desire to see this Bill succeed the last Sessions of Parliament, was sufficiently shewn by the Prince of *Denmark's* constant attendance upon it; and I believe the Reason why some Persons oppos'd it, was, because the Queen seem'd to espouse it.

But pray, Gentlemen, Let us consider, How this Bill came to be lost? Why two or three noble Lords were by turns to be absent? The miscarriage of the Bill was imputed to their want of Attendance, when at the same time they were desired to be out of the way. And is it not a shame, that we, who have given fourscore Millions of Money for the preservation of the Protestant Religion, should have Trimming at last in a Bill to prevent Hypocrisy.

It was a Law among the *Athenians*, that when any Mutiny or difference arose in the City of *Athen*, the Inhabitants should take one side or other, or else they banish'd them the City; and truly, Sir, when Members of Parliament, and Ministers of State stand Neuter, in matters that nearly concern the Interest

terest of the Church of England, and have not Courage to own their Opinion, I think they very well deserve to be turn'd out. Every * Gentleman here is sent up to give his Vote, and when he declines that, he can't be properly said to serve the Place he represents. This I take to be the worst sort of Cowardise.

* Design'd against such as withdrew into the Speaker's Chamber, when the Question was put for passing the Bill.

But pray, Sir, let us enquire into the meaning of all this Tambling. Are we afraid to disoblige a Party of Men, that are against the Church and Government? Whose Principle of Hatred and Malice to the Family of the *Stuarts* descends to them by Inheritance? Men, Sir, that offer'd open violence to her Majesty's Royal Grandfather; Men that have not only the Impudence at this time to justify that fact, but to turn the day of his Murder into Ridicule, and keep a Calves-head-Feast in the City. And can we imagine that those who are Enemies to Her Majesty's Person and Office, and that were for hindering her from coming to the Throne, would not be glad of any opportunity to shove her out of it?

Are these the men to be Countenanc'd and Encourag'd? This in plain English, makes me believe this Ministry has too great a Resemblance of the last; that my Lord *S----* is risen from the dead, and now become Prime Minister of State.

And now I am upon this Subject, give me leave to tell some Gentlemen here, who have been bellowing and roaring against Persons for taking Places in the late Reign, that it is a Reflection upon them to hold and continue their Places in the company of those that they have been exclaiming against.

They may remember, if they please to recollect the Language in the late Reign *Sir, you must turn this Gentleman out, or else I can't serve you.* And if any Gentleman was in the interest of the Church of England, 'twas a sufficient exception against his being employ'd. No Gentleman of that Principle was then thought fit to be a Deputy Lieutenant or a Justice of the Peace. If we would take the same Resolution, and the same Spirit, things might be better managed than they are.

I did wonder to hear so many B-----s against this Bill, but that wonder ceas'd, when I consider'd whom they ow'd their Preferment to. The A. B. p. of C. y. I think, was promoted to that see by my Lord *S-----*'s interest; and being ask'd



ask'd what Reasons he had against this Bill, Replyed, he had not well consider'd the Bill, but that my Lord S—ys told him it ought not to pass. — This was a very weighty Reason for the Head of our Church to give; and yet, I dare say, none of the rest of them could give a better. One would be provok'd by the late behaviour of the B—ts, to move for leave to bring in a Bill for the Toleration of Ep—cy; for, since they are of the same Principles with the Dissenters, it is but just, I think, that they should stand on the same foot.

Now Sir, give me leave to Answer some Objections made against this Bill. The first is, that it's unreasonable at this time. Why unreasonable? Is it not as reasonable for us to pass a Law for the further defence of the Church of *England* here, as it was for *Scotland* to pass an Act last Sessions for the security of the Kirk there? Why unreasonable? Does the success of our Arms abroad, or the laying Money at home depend upon it? No Gentleman can say that either of them do; and since there can be no Objection made against the goodness of the Bill, why should we defer the putting it in execution?

Another Argument against this Bill is, that it will Create Division. Are we to allow a Schism to avoid Division? The Dissenters hold it lawful to communicate sometimes; and if so why unlawful to Communicate at other times? But Oh! the fear of offending Dissenters is to be urg'd as an Argument; and not provoking the Church of *England*. Either the Ministry must think we are so good natur'd, as not to be displeas'd at any thing they do, or else that our Number is so inconsiderable, that they do not value it if we are displeased.

Another Argument against this Bill proceeds from the Number and Strength of the Dissenters. This I take to be an Excellent Argument for the Bill; for if they are so strong and numerous it is high time for us to guard our selves against them, and appeal to every Gentleman here, whether one Dissenter in Place is not capable of doing more Mischief to the Church of *England*, than ten out of it. Suppose, Mr. Speaker, the Dissenters had the Power in their hands (as they will certainly in a short time, if not restrain'd) would they admit the Church of *England* into Places of Trust and into the Legislature upon Occasional Conformity?

Her

Her Majesty has been so Generous as to offer what further security they think fit for the Religion in Scotland; how comes it, that some Gentlemen should represent her Majesty so much concern'd to preserve a Religion she is not of, and so unwilling to grant a security for the Church in which she expects to be saved? According to this Method, one might expect the Scotch Covenant to be brought again into England, and that the Presbyterian Party of that Kingdom, should remonstrate (as they did to her Royal Grandfather) the necessity of having one Religion, and one Worship in both Kingdoms.

We have been under great expences in keeping these Gentlemen out, and have been traduced as Persons designing a French Government; and all the return we are like to have for our services and sufferings, in our Purfes and Reputations, is, that these Persons are like at last to become our Masters, which is a very great Discouragement.

Mr. Speaker, I take this practice of Occasional Conformity, to elude the force of one of the best Laws made in the Church of England's defence, that it is scandalous and Knavish in it self, and I will pretend to foretel this, that by the Benefit of this Occasional Conformity, the Dissenters will come to be the Majority of this House, and then I'll venture to pronounce the days of the Church of England few. That I may not see such dismal Effects of our pretended Moderation, I heartily wish success to this Bill.



FINIS.

